Governors Report December 2024

Pupil Progress

Pupil progress goes from strength to strength as the teaching and learning in the school gets better and better. As governors are aware, for the third year in a row, we have achieved the highest Progress 8 in the country. This has never been achieved before by any school.
We got a Progress 8 of 2.55 and the other two schools above 2, got 2.05 and 2.09. See the table here for a longer discussion about just how amazing Michaela's results have been.

2+	3
1.5+	8
1+	81
0.5+	528
0+	1610
Between 0 and -1	1592
Less than -1	455

Governors should remember that this is being achieved with an intake that does not have the children who attend the local grammar schools. Our top set children for the most part sat the entrance exams to these grammar schools and failed to gain entrance.

The next 2 years will not have a Progress 8 score because these are the Covid years when SATs did not take place so it is impossible to track progress.

The worry about this pause is that this will give the current government an opportunity to either change or abolish Progress 8 so this last year may be the last time our excellent work will rightly be highlighted nationally.

Guests

While there has been a change in culture across schools with the new government's change of focus, I am happy to report that we still have hundreds of guests visiting the school. Most are teachers from across the country, coming to learn from what we do. Chidi came to visit Michaela earlier this week and it would be lovely to see other governors with us in the new year. Governors can sit in lessons and see whether what I say matches up with the reality of the classroom.

Attendance

Michaela's attendance is at 97.5%. So, while we have suffered a hit in terms of attendance following Covid, we have recovered well and we are pleased with the current levels of attendance.

Admissions

Michaela continues to attract a number of families to the school. Every year there are numerous disappointed families who do not get a place for their year 7 child at the school.

We continue to build the numbers at the Sixth Form. We tend to get about 10 to 15 externals every year. There are students who move to London from Birmingham, Manchester and even Belgium to attend Michaela's Sixth Form. One of our girls Bianca, who has now taken up her place at Cambridge to study Medicine, and who worked in reception at Michaela all of last year, used to commute 1.5 hours to and then again from school daily, for 3 years.

But not all 16 year old students are so committed to their learning that they would actively choose to move to Wembley or to commute long distances to reach us. This means that the pool of possible applicants is relatively small in comparison to Sixth Forms that are more centrally located.

Staffing

Michaela continues to hold on to staff for longer periods of time than most London schools. Staff tend to leave so that they can move out of London to start a family. That, or our young staff conclude that while they love teaching at Michaela, they cannot imagine going to another school. When they then think about the next 35 years, they cannot imagine being at Michaela that long and think the wisest move is to start a career in another profession.

We will be losing a few staff this year but I hope to appoint for September as we have done before.